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## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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The [REDACTED] report concerning the Hungarian Railroad

Enclosure: 1 report (3 pages)

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FOREIGN DOCUMENT

Describes Condition of Carriage and Locomotive Park  
of the Hungarian State Railroads

During the past years the condition of the rolling stock of the MAV (Magyar Allamvasutak -- Hungarian State Railroads) has deteriorated to such an extent that communist officials in charge of communications have been obliged to paint a more favorable picture than actually exists in order to avoid being called to account.

Specifically the situation is as follows:

1. Locomotives

As was previously reported the MAV has plenty of first-class locomotives. The exceptionally well built machines of the 424 series can meet every requirement. However, most of the locomotives are U.S.A. made models of the 411 series and they were badly damaged by the low grade coal with which they were ~~burned~~ <sup>fired</sup> last year. Of the original 500 locomotives, 200 have become completely unserviceable. Moreover the need for second class locomotives is constantly growing, because the latter are generally older machines, and putting 10-15 new locomotives of the 375 series into circulation <sup>annually</sup> ~~hardly~~ alters the situation.

The efficiency of the MAV'S locomotive park has been seriously impaired by the poor quality coal which was issued because of the coal shortage. Not only is the coal of an inferior grade, but it contains many non-combustible impurities ~~many~~ such as slate and pebbles.

The competitions which have prolonged the intervals between washing the locomotives and which encourage the overloading of trains have also had very harmful effects. The situation is so grave that the quality of the coal being shipped to the MAV is discussed at every conference of the National Economic Council and the Politbureau. MAV directors <sup>and</sup> ~~including~~ Lajos Bebrits, Minister of Communications, have openly declared that they refuse to be responsible for maintaining <sup>adequate</sup> ~~MAV~~ traffic unless they receive better coal.

The maintenance shops are incapable of handling the rapidly increasing

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calls for repairs, and the quality of work done under competitive pressure is also deteriorating. Tests generally show that newly repaired locomotives need 3 to 4 days additional repair work. For instance, yard tests revealed that a 376 locomotive which had passed inspection at the shop in Szombathely on 28 February required an additional week of work before it could be sent out for an actual road test.

It is typical of the work now being done that two new 303 express locomotives had to be returned to the factory after their trial runs and have still not been approved ~~for circulation~~.

## 2. Freight cars

The situation in regard to freight cars is even worse. Although MAV has 40,000 freight cars, they are rapidly falling into disrepair from the strain of accelerated traffic. It must be remembered that only 10,000 of the 40,000 cars are in any sense modern. The remainder were built during or before the first world war. If the life of a freight car is <sup>estimated</sup> ~~assumed~~ at 40 years, it would mean that to keep it <sup>put</sup> rolling stock in operating condition, MAV should discard 1000 old cars and <sup>put</sup> 1000 new cars into circulation annually. However, since the larger part of Hungarian steel production is at the disposal of the USSR and the construction of military railroads requires great quantities of steel rails, very little raw materiel is left for making new freight cars.

Incidentally, only 100 <sup>e</sup> four-axled passenger coaches of the C a k series with wooden seats have been built since 1949 despite the scarcity of passenger coaches. It still frequently occurs that freight cars must be used to transport passengers.

To reduce the number of cars under repair, the inspection of freight cars was restricted during the fall traffic period from 1 September - 31 December 1951. In other words, the periodic three year inspection was simply omitted. The delayed repairs are being made since 1 Jan 1952 and represent a temporary 33 percent increase in work for the maintainance shops.

At present there is a considerable exchange of cars going on between Hungary and Western Germany. Unfortunately, this means that the MAV must exchange the newer, sturdier German cars in its possessions for its own

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freight cars which were taken to the west during the war.

Nevertheless, the careless shunting resulting from efforts to reduce turn around time is taking the heaviest toll in freight cars.

<sup>T. Lajos</sup>  
Lajos ~~T. Lajos~~, Manager of the Machine Division, is primarily responsible for this situation. He is already issuing regulations designed to handle the fall traffic in the hope that reference to these timely regulations will serve to exonerate him in the future.

The Soviet committee which supervises the operation of the MAV shows <sup>(the serious deterioration of Hungarian rolling stock)</sup> no concern over these problems, because Soviet military and civilian supplies have top shipping priority, and are unaffected.

However, the Soviet committee realizes that the already critical situation might become disastrous in case of mobilization. Therefore the following arrangements have been made: First, every fuel shed is stocked with special Soviet reserves which consist of the best Hungarian, Czechoslovakian and Polish coals. The reserves may be utilized only upon the express command of the USSR. Second, the few freight cars for which steel is available are built exclusively for military purposes and are mainly 4-axled flat cars to be used in shipping tanks. Third, the Soviet military transportation authorities have placed their representatives in the smaller railroad offices as well as in the directorate of the MAV. Furthermore they are establishing entirely independent Soviet military transportation headquarters which will have authority over the military transportation officials assigned to the MAV.

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